

CMS NEWS

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The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) in Philadelphia is bringing together local faith-based leaders in and around Philadelphia to work together to educate Medicare beneficiaries about the new prescription drug benefit that will become available on January 1, 2006.

CMS is a federal agency in the Department of Health and Human Services. CMS, the agency responsible for the Medicare and Medicaid programs, is also the Department's flagship agency for the Medicare prescription drug benefit. As such, CMS is charged with reaching over 43 million Medicare beneficiaries nationwide to educate them about the prescription drug benefit. 600,000 of those beneficiaries live in the Philadelphia area.

"We understand that reaching our Medicare beneficiaries is a multi-pronged approach," says Nancy B. O'Connor, Regional Administrator for CMS. "Partnering with the faith-based community is a key component of CMS' outreach campaign. Faith-based leaders can help us reach the Medicare beneficiaries in the Philadelphia area to ensure that they are aware of Medicare's upcoming coverage of prescription drugs."

This event is the first of its kind, with over 300 faith-based leaders representing 450 congregations invited to this event. It will take place at the Wyndham Franklin Hotel, 17th and Race Streets, on Saturday, April 16 from 9 a.m. to 12 noon.

While at the event, faith based leaders will learn more about the Medicare prescription drug benefit and how to get help with the cost of prescription drugs for members of their congregation who need it the most. Faith-based leaders will brainstorm with CMS on the best ways to reach Medicare beneficiaries in Philadelphia to educate them on the Medicare prescription drug benefit.

For more information, or to register for this event, contact Melissa Herd at 215-861-4778 or mherd@cms.hhs.gov < <mailto:mherd@cms.hhs.gov> >.